NO. 13
FEB 1990

THE SANDMAN™

$1.50 US
$1.85 CAN
80p UK
SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS

the DOLL'S HOUSE part 4

GAIMAN • ZULLI • PARKHOUSE

"MEN OF GOOD FORTUNE"

GAIMAN — WRITER
ZULLI — PENCILS
PARKHOUSE — INKS
KLEIN — LETTERS
ZYLONOL — COLORS
YOUNG — ASSOC. EDITOR
BERGER — EDITOR

--THIRD POLL TAX IN THREE YEARS. WHAT ELSE COULD WE HAVE DONE?

ALL I'M SAYING IS WHEN BALL AND TYLER WERE KILLED, THE SPIRIT OF THE WORKING MAN DIED WITH THEM.

PENNY ALE AND COLD BACON. PENNY ALE AND COLD BACON. I WOULD HAVE GOOD HOT MEAT AND FRENCH WINE.

--WAR, PLAGUE, AND TWO BLOODY POPES, FIGHTING LIKE WEASELS IN HEAT. THE END OF THE WORLD IS SOON, YOU MARK ME.

...MURDER, NOR RAPE. WE NEED A RETURN TO LAW, AND TO ORDER. THE KING SHOULD ACT AGAINST THESE BANDITS.

...very well. But I still do not see what purpose this will serve.

WELL, AT LEAST I GET OUT AND *MEET* THEM.

I JUST THINK MAYBE IT WOULD BE GOOD FOR YOU TO SEE THEM ON *THEIR* TERMS, INSTEAD OF YOURS.

--LOOK, *I'VE* SEEN DEATH. I LOST HALF MY *VILLAGE* TO THE BLACK DEATH. I FOUGHT UNDER BUCKINGHAM IN BURGUNDY, AND YOU KNOW WHAT A PIG'S EAR *THAT* WAS.

IT'S NOT LIKE I DON'T KNOW WHAT DEATH *IS*.

CONVERSION BY WILDSTORM

A PENNY ALE FOR ME, AND ANOTHER FOR MY BROTHER, AN' IT PLEASE YOU.

CERTAINLY, LADY.

GEOFFREY, I SEE NO GREAT WRONG IN WRITING IN THE *LANGUE DES TRAVAILLISTES* RATHER THAN *LA BELLE FRANÇAIS*; BUT ENGLISH HAS ITS OWN FORMS OF VERSE.

PIERS PLOWMAN. THAT'S WHAT PEOPLE WANT. NOT FILTHY TALES IN RHYME ABOUT PILGRIMS.

BUT I *ENJOY* RHYMING, EDMUND. AND I ENJOY TAVERN TALES TOLD OF AN EVENING.

...UP HER DRESS, AND SHE SAYS, "ARE YOU HUNTING FOR RABBITS AGAIN, FRIAR?"

Y'ARE A FOOL, HOB. DEATH COMES TO EVERY MAN. THIRTY YEARS, IF HE ESCAPE THE PLAGUE, OR THE FLUX, OR THE FRENCH. SIXTY YEARS, WITH FORTUNE, AND IF GOD IS WILLING.

THEN THEY PUT YOU IN THE GROUND, TO AWAIT THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT.

THERE YOU GO-- PROVES MY POINT. ALL I'M SAYING IS THIS.

NOBODY *HAS* TO DIE.

THE ONLY REASON PEOPLE DIE, IS BECAUSE *EVERYONE* DOES IT. YOU ALL JUST GO ALONG WITH IT.

IT'S *RUBBISH*, DEATH. IT'S *STUPID*. I DON'T WANT NOTHING TO DO WITH IT.

A delegation of faerie came to me, last night. They are talking about abandoning this plane for ever.

SHUSH. LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE.

I MEAN, WHAT'S IT *GOOD* FOR, EH?

THINK ABOUT IT.

I MADE MY MIND UP ARSE DEEP IN BURGUNDY MUD. "HOB GADLING," I TOLD MYSELF, EVERY MAN AND WOMAN DIES, THEY SAY--"

--EXCEPT THE WANDERING JEW, AHASUERUS, WHO DENIED OUR LORD.

YEAH. FAIR ENOUGH. EVERYONE DIES, I THOUGHT (EXCEPT FOR MAYBE THE WANDERING JEW), BUT WHY THE HELL SHOULD *I*? I MIGHT GET LUCKY.

THERE'S ALWAYS A FIRST TIME.

NO, IT'S RUBBISH, DEATH IS. I MEAN, THERE'S SO MUCH TO DO. SO MANY THINGS TO SEE. PEOPLE TO DRINK WITH. WOMEN TO SWIVE.

YOU LOT MAY DIE. I EXPECT YOU *WILL*, 'COS YOU'RE STUPID. NOT ME, THOUGH.

It might be interesting...?

VERY WELL.

ARE YOU GOING TO TELL HIM, OR AM I?

I shall.

VERY WELL, LITTLE BROTHER.

GEOFFREY, FOR A DIPLOMAT, *TU JUGES MAL LA NATURE HUMAINE.*

VERY WELL.

THE ENGLISH WERE BORN TO HUNT SPITTARD AND STAG. IF THEY TAKE THAT AWAY FROM US, 'TWILL BE "JOHN BALL HAS RUNGEN YOUR BELL" ONCE MORE.

Did I hear you say that you had no intention of ever dying?

UM. YEAH. *YEAH.* THAT'S RIGHT. IT'S A MUG'S GAME. I WON'T HAVE ANY PART OF IT.

Then you must tell me what it's like.

Let us meet here again, Robert Gadling. In this tavern of the White Horse.

In a hundred years.

OH, HE'S GOT YOU THERE, HOB GADLING!

A *STING!* A *TOUCH!* YOUR GAME IS CALLED, HOB!

A-HA-HA-HA! A 'NUNDRED YEARS! YES, AND *I'M* POPE URBAN!

AND *I'M* POPE CLEMENT! OH, *HOO-HOO,* I SHALL SPLIT MY SIDES OF LAUGHTER...

DON'T MIND THEM. THEY'RE THICK AS KING DICK, THE LOT OF THEM. A HUNDRED YEARS' TIME. ON THIS DAY.

I WILL SEE YOU IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD FOURTEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY NINE, THEN.

"WHO WAS THAT, THEN, HOBBSIE?"

"HAVEN'T A CLUE. BUT I'LL TELL YOU WHAT, CRISPIN: I'LL ASK HIM THE NEXT TIME I SEE HIM. IN A HUNDRED YEARS' TIME."

"OOH-HA-HA, *DON'T.* I CAN LAUGH NO MORE. YOU'LL *KILL* ME."

HOW DID YOU KNOW?

WHO ARE YOU?

A WIZARD? A SAINT?

A DEMON? HAVE I UNWITTING MADE A BARGAIN WITH THE DEVIL?

No. I am merely... interested.

THEN WHY AREN'T I DEAD, LONG SINCE? IS THIS SOME KIND OF GAME?

You have not died, I see.

HAHH. NO. I'D SAY THE SAME ABOUT YOU, ONLY YOU'RE SO PALE THAT I COULD BE WRONG.

Yes. You could. I came because I am... interested. Death will not touch you, Hob Gadling, unless you truly desire it.

YEAH. LIKE I SAID. IT'S JUST PEOPLE GOING ALONG WITH IT.

I'LL TELL YOU, THOUGH. IT'S ALL CHANGING.

In what way?

FNUUURF

HEAR THAT? NOW WE HAVE CHIMBLIES THEY COMPLAIN OF RHEUMES, CATARRHS, THEY SNEEZE AND GROAN.

WHEN WE HAD HONEST BRAZIERS OUR HEADS DID NEVER ACHE. THE SMOKE WAS GOOD HARDENING FOR THE TIMBERS OF THE HOUSES AND GOOD MEDICINE FOR THE MAN AND HIS FAMILY.

OLD IDIOT!

I'LL TELL YOU, CHIMNEYS IS BRILLIANT. NOT HAVING YOUR EYES WATERING ALL THE TIME. NOT FREEZING FROM THE HOLES IN THE WALL.

AND LITTLE CLOTH PIECES FOR YOUR NOSE. IN THE OLD DAYS WE USED OUR SLEEVES.

SEE THE BUNCH IN THE CORNER, PLAYING AT TRUMP, AND RUFF? WE NEVER HAD *THEM* IN THE OLD DAYS. PLAYING-CARDS...

Most impressive. What WILL you people think of next?

SOMETHING TO GET RID OF FLEAS, WITH ANY LUCK.

So what have you been doing for the last hundred years?

SAME TRADE AS BEFORE. SOLDIERING, MAINLY. A LITTLE BANDITRY HERE AND THERE, IF I COULDN'T FIND WHAT YOU'D EXACTLY CALL A WAR...

I WAS PLEASED WHEN THE FIGHTING CAME TO ENGLAND. SAVES GOING ALL THE WAY TO FRANCE... SOMETIMES I'VE FOUGHT FOR YORK, SOMETIMES FOR LANCASTER.

THAT'S BEEN QUIET FOR A FEW YEARS NOW, SINCE RICHMOND GOT IN. KING HENRY AS IS. BUT IT'LL START UP AGAIN SOON, YOU'LL SEE.

AND IN THE MEANTIME, I'VE STARTED IN A TRADE. WORKING WITH A FRIEND OF MINE.

IT WON'T LAST.

BUT IT'S A NEW TRADE. IT'S CALLED *PRINTING*. DON'T NEED TO BE A GUILD MEMBER--NOT YET. NEVER BE A *REAL* DEMAND FOR IT, MIND YOU. HARD WORK.

BUT BEATS THE HELL OUT OF ROTTING TO MAGGOTS IN THE GROUND, EH?

"So you still want to live?"

"OH YES."

"A hundred years, then?"

"OH YES."

WELL, KIT, YOUR THEME AS I SAW IT IS THIS: THAT FOR ONE'S ART AND FOR ONE'S DREAMS ONE MAY CONSORT AND BARGAIN WITH THE DARKEST POW'RS.

'TIS SO.

MY FRIEND!

SIT DOWN. I'VE GOT IN A COUPLE OF BOTTLES OF WINE FOR US. ALREADY MADE A START ON THEM.

Hello, Hob.

"HOB"? FAITH, THAT TAKES ME BACK SOME FEW YEARS.

IT'S SIR ROBERT GADLEN NOW, OLD STRANGER.

You have had good fortune, I take it.

GOOD FORTUNE? THE GODS HAVE SMILED ON ME, AS THEY SMILE ON ALL ENGLAND, WHERE NO MAN IS SLAVE OR BONDSMAN.

VENISON PASTY? NO? THEY'RE GOOD.

LET'S SEE...

LAST TIME WE SPOKE I WAS WORKING WITH BILLY CAXTON. I MADE SOME GOLD FROM THAT. PUT IT TO WORK IN HENRY TUDOR'S SHIPYARDS. I MADE A SMALL PILE. I'VE STILL GOT SHIPPING INTERESTS.

WENT NORTH FOR A YEAR OR SO, CAME BACK AS MY SON. DONE THAT TWICE, NOW.

GIRL! MORE WINE!

WHEN FAT HENRY DONE FOR THE MONASTERIES I BOUGHT MY ESTATES. AND A HEALTHY GIFT OF GOLD TO THE CROWN SAW TO A KNIGHTHOOD.

IT'S SO DAMN RICH.

I see.

AND THAT'S NOT ALL. *HERE,* TAKE A LOOK AT *THIS!* MY FAIR ELEANOR. AND LITTLE ROBYN.

MY *FIRST* SON BORN IN OVER 200 YEARS ON THIS EARTH. WELL, THAT I HAVE KNOWN OF, ANYWAY.

AND THE QUEEN HERSELF SLEPT AT MY HOUSE LAST SUMMER. *THAT* WAS EXPENSIVE.

IT'S FUNNY...

THIS IS WHAT I ALWAYS DREAMED HEAVEN WOULD BE LIKE, WAY BACK. IT'S SAFE TO WALK THE STREETS, ENOUGH FOOD, AND GOOD WINE.

LIFE IS *SO RICH.*

MORE *WINE!* MORE *ALE!* AND BUSS ME QUICK, MY SWEET.

I'LL STICK WITH BOYS-- MY HORNED "ACTRESSES."

SWEET KIT. THE PLAY I GAVE YOU. DID YOU READ...?

I MUST CONFESS I HAVE. I...THOUGHT IT, WELL... YOU *ACT* WELL, WILL, BUT-- LISTEN, LET ME READ...

"HUNG BE THE HEAVENS WITH BLACK, YIELD DAY TO NIGHT! COMETS IMPORTING CHANGE OF TIMES AND STATES, BRANDISH YOUR CRYSTAL TRESSES IN THE SKY, AND WITH THEM SCOURGE THE BAD, REVOLTING STARS."

AT LEAST IT SCANS. BUT "BAD REVOLTING STARS"?

IT'S MY FIRST PLAY.

AND IT SHOULD BE YOUR LAST.

GOD'S WOUNDS! IF ONLY I COULD WRITE LIKE YOU!

IN FAUSTUS WHERE YOU WROTE-- "TO GOD! HE LOVES THEE NOT! THE GOD THOU SERVEST IS THINE OWN APPETITE, WHEREIN IS FIXED THE LOVE OF BEELZEBUB."

"TO HIM I'LL BUILD AN ALTAR AND A CHURCH, AND OFFER LUKEWARM BLOOD OF NEW-BORN BABES."

IT CHILLS MY BLOOD.

AND SO IT SHOULD, GOOD WILL.

I WOULD GIVE ANYTHING TO HAVE YOUR GIFTS. OR MORE THAN ANYTHING TO GIVE MEN DREAMS, THAT WOULD LIVE ON LONG AFTER I AM DEAD.

I'D BARGAIN, LIKE YOUR FAUSTUS, FOR THAT BOON.

Who is he?

ACTS A BIT. WROTE A PLAY.

Is he good?

NO. HE'S CRAP.

NOW, THAT CHAP THERE, WITH THE BROKEN LEG, NEXT TO HIM. BENT AS A PEWTER DUCAT. HE'S A GOOD PLAYWRIGHT.

Hmmm.

Are you Will Shaxberd?

AYE, SIR. HAVE WE MET?

We have. But men forget, in waking hours.

I heard your talk, Will. Would you write great plays? Create new dreams to spur the minds of men? Is that your will?

IT IS.

Then let us talk.

WHITE BREAD.

I WOULD HAVE *KILLED* FOR WHITE BREAD, TWO HUNDRED YEARS BACK.

COME TO THINK OF IT, I *DID*, A COUPLE OF TIMES.

EVERYTHING TO LIVE FOR. AND NOWHERE TO GO BUT UP.

HMMPH. DO NOT BE SO FREE IN ASSIGNING PLAGUES, FIRES OR FLOODS TO THE JUDGEMENT OF THE LORD, FOR OUR SINS.

... MAKE MORE FROM THEIR POOR DOLE THAN THEY WOULD FOR HONEST WORK. I TELL YOU, SIR, MEN WITHOUT JOBS SELDOM DRINK OTHER THAN THE STRONGEST ALE-HOUSE BEER, OR EAT ANY BREAD SAVE THAT MADE WITH THE FINEST WHEAT FLOUR

CAN I HELP YOU, SIR?

No, thank you. I am waiting for someone.

YER FACKIN' DUNGWITS! GERRAHTAMEWAY!

GET AWAY, YOU FUDDLED *JUG-BITER!*

THIS TAVERN'S FOR *GENTRY* AND *DECENT* FOLK. YOU GET BACK TO THE *STEWS* WITH THE REST OF THE *FILTH!*

UHN.

Let him be.

He is my guest.

KHK. KHKAK.

I KNEW YE'D BE HERE.

DO YOU KNOW... KHAHK...

HOW *HUNGRY* A MAN CAN GET? IF HE DOESN'T *DIE*? BUT DOESN'T *EAT*?

SHE DIED. IN CHILDBIRTH. *ELEANOR*. I DON'T REMEMBER WHAT SHE *LOOKED* LIKE ANY MORE. I PAWNED HER PORTRAIT FIFTY YEARS SINCE...

ROBYN DIED IN A TAVERN BRAWL WHEN HE WAS TWENTY. I DIDN'T GO OUT MUCH AFTER THAT.

THEY TRIED TO DROWN ME AS A WITCH. I'D LIVED THERE FOR FORTY YEARS. OVERCONFIDENT...

I GOT OUT WITH MY SKIN. LITTLE MORE. AND THEN IT GOT WORSE, AND WORSE, AND...

KHK. WORSE.

I FOUGHT FOR THE KING IN PARLIAMENT'S WAR. **BIG** MISTAKE, THAT WAS. I GOT CARELESS. I GOT SOFT. LIKE THE COUNTRY...

I'VE HATED EVERY **SECOND** OF THE LAST EIGHTY YEARS. **EVERY BLOODY SECOND**. YOU KNOW THAT?

And you still wish to live? Do you not seek the respite of death?

ARE YOU CRAZY?

DEATH IS A MUG'S GAME. I GOT SO MUCH TO **LIVE** FOR.

"IT'S A LIVING.

"WONDERFUL SYSTEM, REALLY. WE TAKE ENGLISH COTTON GOODS TO AFRICA, GET A CARGO OF NEGROES, PACK 'EM IN LIKE SARDINES, SAME BOAT TAKES 'EM ACROSS THE ATLANTIC, COMES BACK WITH RAW COTTON, TOBACCO AND SUGAR.

"FUNNY THING IS, *I* SORT OF STARTED IT ALL. I MEAN, IT WAS ME THAT FUNDED JACK HAWKINS, WHAT, TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO, NOW..."

"You take pride in treating your fellow humans as less than animals?"

"LIKE I SAID, IT'S A LIVING."

"I HEARD SOMETHING ***FUNNY***, THE OTHER WEEK.

"BLOKE SAID TO ME, HE SAID, 'IF ONLY THE FRENCH NOBLES HAD PLAYED CRICKET WITH THEIR MEN, THE WAY WE DO, THEY'D NEVER HAVE ***HAD*** THIS TROUBLE.'

"FIRST THE COLONIES, NOW FRANCE. YOU ASK ME, ***THIS*** COUNTRY'LL BE NEXT FOR A REVOLUTION. I BEEN SALTING MONEY AWAY ALL OVER THE WORLD."

"ODD'S LIFE--FIRST SIGN OF TROUBLE I'LL BE OUT OF HERE LIKE ***THAT***."

YE COBBETT ROOM

Your spirits seem much improved since our last encounter.

I SUPPOSE THEY HAVE.

I SAW *KING LEAR* YESTERDAY. MRS. SIDDONS AS GONERIL. THE IDIOTS HAD GIVEN IT A HAPPY ENDING.

That will not last. The Great Stories will always return to their original forms.

THAT LAD, WILL SHAKESPEARE. YOU DID SOME KIND OF *DEAL* WITH HIM, DIDN'T YOU?

Perhaps.

WHAT *KIND* OF DEAL? HIS *SOUL*?

Nothing so crude.

FOUR HUNDRED YEARS, NOW, I'VE BEEN MEETING YOU HERE, AND THERE'S SO MUCH I *STILL* DON'T KNOW...

WHO ARE YOU, TRULY? WHAT MANNER OF MAN ARE YOU?

WHAT'S YOUR *NAME*?

LA! I MIGHT ASK BOTH OF YOU THAT SAME QUESTION, GENTLEMEN.

PLEASE, DO NOT TROUBLE YOURSELVES TO RISE.

THESE ARE MICHAEL AND TOBIAS.

SMUGGLERS BY TRADE, ALTHOUGH, WITH AN EYE TO THEIR FORTUNES, THEY'RE ONLY TOO GLAD TO AUGMENT THEIR EARNINGS BY SLITTING THROATS FOR HIRE.

IF YOU MOVE THEY'LL SLIT YOURS.

I DO NOT--BELIEVE--I HAVE HAD--THE HONOR--OF YOUR ACQUAINTANCE--MADAME.

YOU DON'T *TALK* TILL MILADY SAYS AS SUCH, *WHORESON.*

NAY, LET THEM TALK, GOOD TOBY.

THEY TELL A TALE, IN THESE PARTS OF LONDON, THAT THE *DEVIL* AND THE *WANDERING JEW* MEET, ONCE IN EVERY CENTURY, IN A TAVERN.

TWO YEARS PAST, SEWN IN THE SHIRT OF A DEAD MAN, I FOUND ME A NICE DESCRIPTION OF THEIR LAST MEETING. *THIS* INN WAS NAMED, LIKEWISE THIS DAY.

FOR TWO YEARS, SIRS, I HAVE PLANNED OUR PRESENT *RENDEZ-VOUS.*

WELL? HAVE YOU NOTHING TO SAY?

I am no devil.

AND I'M NOT JEWISH.

FIE! WHAT MANNER OF CREATURES *ARE* YOU, THEN?

WHO WANTS TO KNOW?

I AM LADY JOHANNA CONSTANTINE.

I KNEW A *JACK* CONSTANTINE ONCE. *CUNNING MAN.* GOT HIMSELF KILLED BEFORE YOU WERE BORN. *LONG* TIME AGO, NOW.

YOU WILL FOLLOW ME, SIRS. MY COACH WAITS WITHOUT. I SEE THERE IS MUCH YOU BOTH CAN TELL ME.

SO MUCH I CAN LEARN...

No.

No, I think not.

NO! NOT THOU! THOU'RT GONE!

OH, 'TWAS NOT MY INTENT, HEAVEN BE MY WITNESS!

AH! I DURST NOT LOOK AT THEE!

WHAT DID YOU DO TO HER?

She has old ghosts, that I have shown to her.

Her kind walk amidst the flotsam of lives they have sacrificed, for their own purposes, till friendless and alone they needs must make the final sacrifice.

YEAH. JACK WAS LIKE THAT, TOO.

DIED IN A CHURCH-YARD IN ESSEX. NASTY BUSINESS. I WAS WITH HIM, BUT THE NIGHT-WALKERS LET ME BE, THOUGH THEY LEFT PRECIOUS LITTLE OF HIM.

I HAD NIGHTMARES ABOUT THAT NIGHT FOR TEN YEARS AFTER...

HE ALSO CAME TO ME, FOR KNOWLEDGE, IN QUEEN BESS'S DAY, BUT HE WAS A GREAT DEAL MORE CIVIL ABOUT ASKING FOR IT.

BOUGHT ME A DRINK FIRST, FOR A START.

Robert Gadling?

YES?

"It is a poor thing, to enslave another. I would suggest you find yourself a different line of business".

EEK!

OHH! YOU GAVE ME A START, SIR! FER A SECOND I THOUGHT YOU WAS BLOODY JACK *HISSELF!*

NO.

OOH, I KNOWED *THAT*, SIR. JUST JOSHING YOU.

SO, *HOW'D* YOU LIKE TO BUY A GAL A DRAIN OF PALE? THEN MAYBE A QUICK BUM-DANCE. GIVE US A HARD RIDE WIV YER CREAM-STICK.

I think not.

PASTY-FACED PUSSY-COVE! BET YOU IN'T GOT IT IN YOU ANYWAY, YOU *SKINNY CHICKALEARY!*

muuuurp...

THE *FIRST* I MET A CORNET WAS'N A REGIMENT OF DRAGOONS. I GAVE HIM WHAT HE *DID*N'T LIKE, AND *STOLE* HIS SILVER SPOONS...

HULLO, MISTER. BUY A LADY A DRAIN OF PALE?

I SEE YOU HAD A RUN-IN WITH LUSHING LOU. IN HERE THEY CALL HER "THE HOSPITAL."

Really? Why?

BECAUSE SHE'S IN 'EM A GREAT DEAL, AND BECAUSE SHE'S SENT SO MANY MEN INTO THEM. ROTTEN THING, THE POX.

I see.

THIS AREA'S REALLY GONE DOWNHILL IN THE LAST HUNDRED YEARS, I STARTED COMING HERE A MONTH OR SO BACK.

DON'T WANT A REPEAT OF *LAST* TIME'S MESS, DO WE?

I saw her again, you know.

LADY JOHANNA?

Indeed. She undertook to fulfill a task for me. And succeeded admirably, I might add.

MM. I'VE NOTICED... I'M NOT THE *ONLY* ONE WHO DOESN'T DIE...

THERE'S A BLOKE AS CALLS HIMSELF *BLOOD* I'VE MET HALF-A-DOZEN TIMES NOW, ALTHOUGH HE DOESN'T ALWAYS REMEMBER ME.

AND THERE'S MAD HETTIE, DOWN ON OLD COMPTON STREET. BEEN THERE A HUNDRED TWENTY YEARS AT LEAST, TO MY KNOWLEDGE. MAD AS A COOT, BUT *SHE* ISN'T GOING TO DIE...

DEATH'S A CAPRICIOUS THING, INNIT?

Yes. Yes, she is.

Y'KNOW, I THINK I *KNOW* WHY WE MEET HERE, CENTURY AFTER CENTURY. IT'S *NOT* BECAUSE YOU WANT TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A MAN DON'T DIE.

YOU'VE *SEEN* WHAT HAPPENS.

I DOUBT I'M ANY *WISER* THAN I WAS FIVE HUNDRED YEARS BACK. I'M *OLDER*. I'VE BEEN UP, AND BEEN DOWN, AND BEEN UP AGAIN.

HAVE I *LEARNED* OUGHT? I'VE LEARNED FROM MY *MISTAKES*, BUT I'VE HAD *MORE* TIME TO COMMIT *MORE* MISTAKES.

YOU WERE *RIGHT* ABOUT THE SLAVE TRADE. I CAN NEVER MAKE RESTITUTION FOR *THAT*, BUT...

LISTEN, I'VE SEEN *PEOPLE*, AND THEY DON'T CHANGE. NOT IN THE *IMPORTANT* THINGS.

I DOUBT I'LL *EVER* SEEK DEATH.

YOU'VE OBSERVED ALL THAT. BUT YOU KNEW IT FROM THE *START*.

I THINK YOU'RE HERE FOR SOMETHING ELSE.

And what might that be?

FRIENDSHIP.

You DARE? You dare imply that I might befriend a mortal? That one of my kind might NEED companionship?

I THINK YOU'RE *LONELY*.

You dare to call me lonely?

YES. *YES* I *DO*.

TELL YOU WHAT. *I'LL* BE HERE IN A HUNDRED YEARS' TIME. IF *YOU'RE* HERE THEN, TOO--IT'LL BE BECAUSE WE'RE *FRIENDS*. *NO* OTHER REASON.

RIGHT?

...RIGHT?

...THATCHER'S BLOODY POLL TAX. THERE'S GOING TO BE A REVOLUTION IF THEY TRY TO PUSH IT THROUGH...

...I SEE IT, THE LABOUR MOVEMENT DIED WITH THE MINER'S STRIKE...

...ALL THE SIGNS ARE THERE, IN THE BIBLE. IT'LL BE THE END OF THE WORLD VERY SOON...

...NO RESPECT FOR LAW AND ORDER...

...OF COURSE AIDS ISN'T GOD'S WAY OF PUNISHING PEOPLE, DARREN. DON'T BE A PILLOCK...

...UP HER DRESS, AND SHE SAYS, "ARE YOU HUNTING FOR RABBITS AGAIN, VICAR?"

...MAKE MORE ON THE DOLE THAN THEY WOULD FROM AN HONEST DAY'S WORK...

I...

I WASN'T SURE YOU'D BE COMING.

Really?

I have always heard it was impolite to keep one's friends waiting.

Would you like a drink?

NEXT: COLLECTORS

FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES
#1 BEST-SELLING AUTHOR

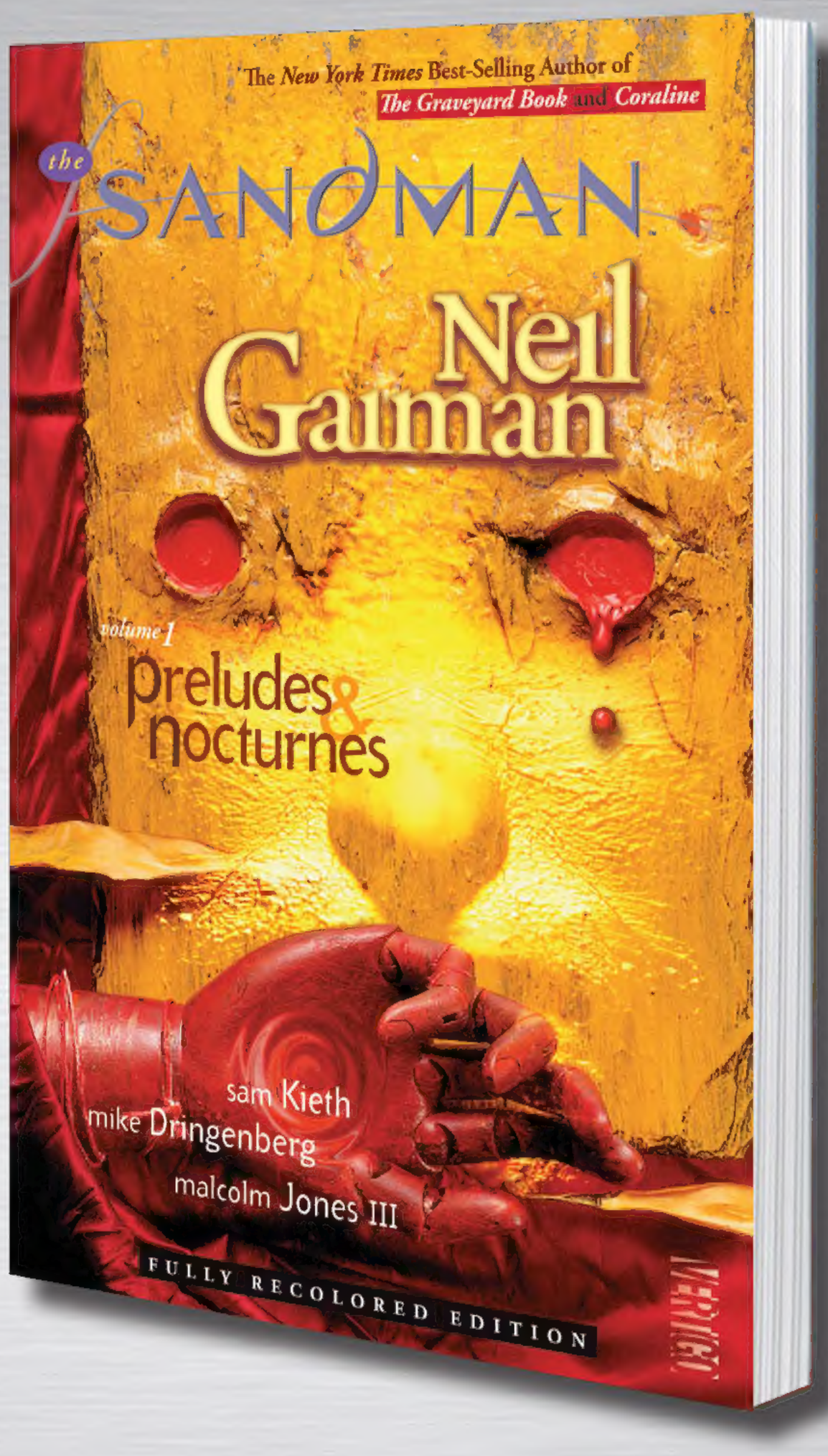
NEIL GAIMAN

"What Gaiman has written is a comics masterpiece."
– PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

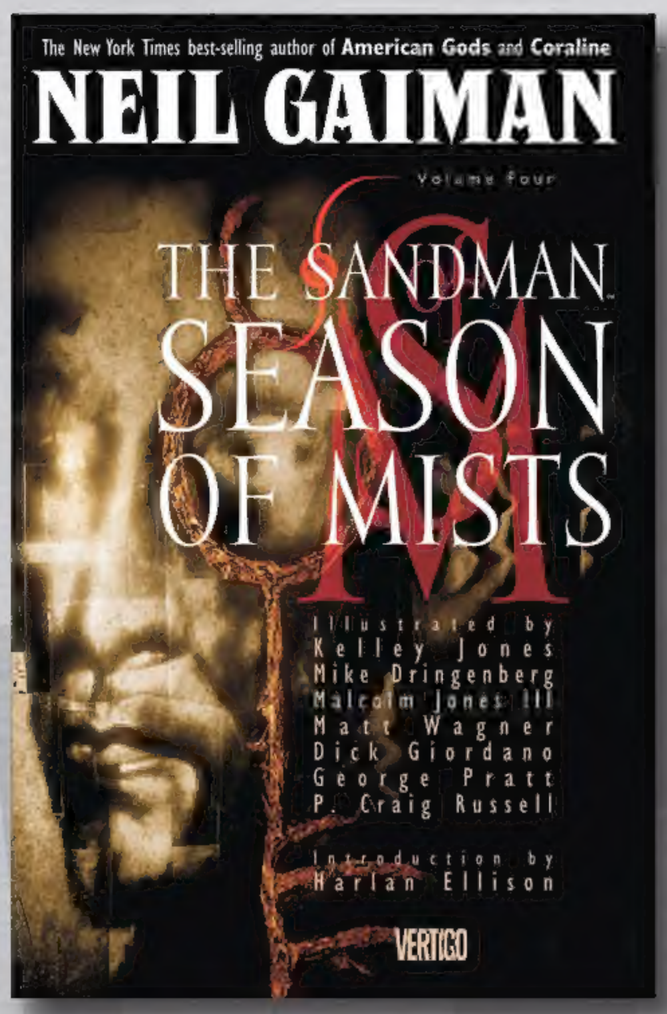
"SANDMAN just might be the smartest comic book ever written."
– USA TODAY

"The landmark comic-book series that actually made death seem cool."
– ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

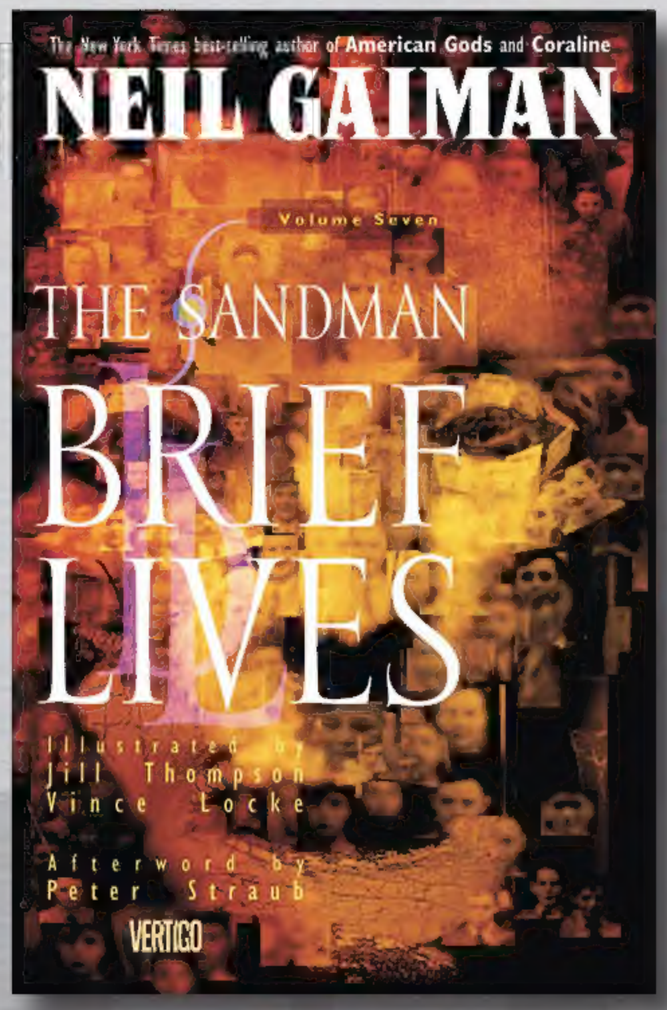
"This is the stuff dreams are made of."
– IGN.com



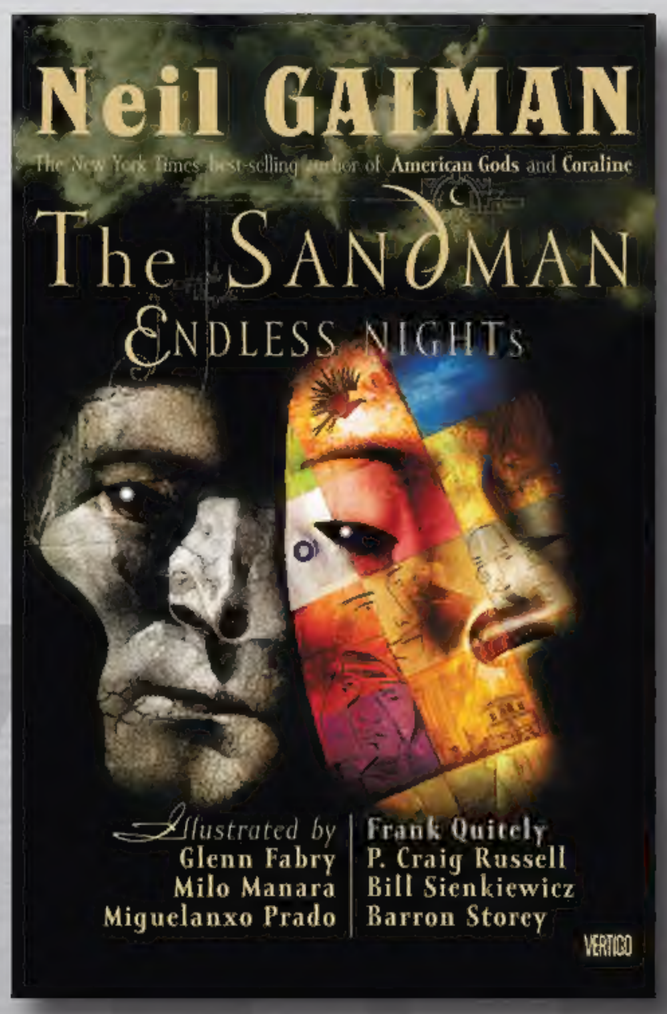
THE SANDMAN VOL. 4:
SEASON OF MISTS



THE SANDMAN VOL. 7:
BRIEF LIVES



THE SANDMAN:
ENDLESS NIGHTS



Use the **BUY IN PRINT** feature to find a comics shop near you.
Check back here every week for **NEW DIGITAL RELEASES**!

Suggested for Mature Readers

E
E
M
P
I
R
SON OF ULTRON